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# THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

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Johannes Weiss, *Das Urchristentum*, Göttingen, 1917.

Alfred Loisy, *Les Actes des Apôtres*, Paris, 1920.

F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Volume I, London, 1920.

Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums*, Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921.

Roland Schütz, *Apostel und Jünger, eine quellenkritische und geschichtliche Untersuchung über die Entstehung des Christentums*, Giessen, 1921.

B. H. Streeter, 'Fresh Light on the Synoptic Problem,' *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1921.

THE purpose of this article is not so much to offer a review of the books mentioned above as to indicate briefly their nature and contents, and to discuss the varied yet similar points of view which they represent toward some of the problems in the story of Christian origins as studied today.

Johannes Weiss will always hold a prominent place in the history of research into the meaning of early Christian literature. His treatment of 1 Corinthians, even for those who do not wholly accept his critical dissections, is one of the great commentaries on any single book of the New Testament; though for many his highest achievement will always seem to be his *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, especially in the first edition, of which the freshness and vigor were somewhat impaired by the emendations and additions in the second. It was a great loss to theological learning that he died so prematurely in 1914. His last book, *Das Urchristentum*, was left partly unfinished, and owes its final pages to Professor Knopf. It is a large book, but shows with sad clearness a certain hurriedness and lack of proportion due to the race with death which the author was running. The first 510 pages were published before his death, the rest were only partly ready, but were finished by Professor Knopf, and appeared in 1917. The whole

follows what have become the conventional lines for an historical investigation of early Christianity. There is first a description of the primitive church, then of the mission to the Gentiles and of Paul's work, followed by a long discussion of Paul as a Christian and a theologian. These comprise the part published in 1913; the remaining parts now added discuss the spread of Christianity in the first century, and the special characteristics and history of the church in Judaea, Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achaea, and Rome.

The next two books, *Les Actes des Apôtres* by Professor Loisy, and *The Beginnings of Christianity*, volume I, by Dr. F. J. Foakes Jackson and myself, are specially concerned with the Acts of the Apostles, and discuss it mainly as the chief source of our knowledge about the primitive church. Dr. Jackson and I have issued the historical prolegomena in one volume, reserving the critical prolegomena for a second, and the text and commentary for a third. Volume I appeared in 1920, volume II will come early in 1922, and the volume with the text probably in 1923.

Loisy has published his prolegomena and commentary in one large volume of more than one thousand pages; he devotes the first fifty pages to an account of modern criticism of Acts, ending with a slightly acid discussion of the works of Harnack, from whom he differs sharply. On the other hand he accepts a suggestion of Eduard Norden in *Agnostos Theos* which I admit did not seem to me acceptable, especially in the form in which he made it. Norden argued from the imperfect nature of the preface to Acts that the original work of Luke had been a work in two volumes, which was a complete, consistent, and finished production, but was taken over by a later editor who submitted it to drastic interpolations consistent with themselves but not with the source. Loisy accepts this view and throughout his commentary endeavours to distinguish between the Source and the Interpolator, instead of speculating about the sources used by the final editor whom most earlier critics have held responsible for the preface in spite of its bad grammar. I am still unconvinced that this is right, but Loisy's book combined with the sympathy shown for the same theory

by Eduard Meyer has shown me that the suggestion cannot be ignored as it will be found to be in the second volume of 'The Beginnings of Christianity.' Fortunately there will be opportunity in a later volume to repair this fault.

Loisy goes on in his introduction to work out the consequences of his theory and to reconstruct the true history of events as he conceives it. It is curious to notice that the historical results which he reaches are in many ways similar to those of Dr. Jackson and myself. This is partly due to the fact that both have been influenced by the well-known theories of Eduard Schwartz. The commentary, which covers 964 pages, is charmingly written with a peculiarly French incisiveness and brilliance. To point out that it has the defects of its qualities, and seems sometimes to omit considerations which point against the conclusions adopted, is merely to say that M. Loisy is French. The relative position of his book and my own may be discovered from the judgment of two critics. In reviewing 'The Beginnings of Christianity' the Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. Inge, expressed his kind conviction that we were not so bad as Burkitt or Loisy, and a French writer, whose name was not given but who at least belongs to the circle of M. Loisy, described us as being timorous rather than rash in our criticism. I rejoice at this evidence that we are walking in the middle of the road, — *in medio tutissimus ibis*, — though I admit that a walk between M. Loisy and the Dean of St. Paul's suggests to my mind excitement rather than safety.

The first of three volumes on the Origin and Beginnings of Christianity has just been published by Eduard Meyer, and contains his treatment of the gospels. Like Dr. Jackson and myself he regards the Lucan writings as the correct point at which investigations should begin, but instead of prefixing a superficial analysis of the gospels to the thorough study of Acts he has prefixed a superficial study of Acts to a thorough study of the gospels. Each method has its advantages, and it is, I think, a happy accident that we have gone different ways. Eduard Meyer expressly states that he has not studied much of the literature of the twentieth century, and hardly any of the nineteenth, on the subject which he is treating, and the

professional theologian will occasionally be surprised at the internal evidence of this fact. But it is only very stupid theologians, however learned they may be, who will think that this renders his book unimportant. Eduard Meyer is one of the greatest living students of ancient history, with an extremely wide knowledge of ancient literature. His ignorance of the modern treatment of the subject would debar his work from acceptance as a doctor's thesis in many of our universities, but it does not prevent him from writing a book which ought to be studied by all who are engaged in research into early Christian literature. The fact that both these statements are true may give rise to thought, and suggest that we are apt to pay too much attention to the books described as "secondary authorities," ("second hand" would be better) and to allow the memorized learning of modern books to be a substitute for an intelligent understanding of original sources.

Roland Schütz's book is of a somewhat different character. Its centre is a relatively small point in the literary criticism of Acts, but it spreads out into historical speculation, and the last chapter, though of only twenty-four pages, offers extremely suggestive, if not always convincing, prolegomena to a history of early Christianity. Few will agree with all of it; anyone can read it in a single hour; but it will need many hours of well-spent thought to formulate clearly the reasons for disagreement.

All these books have the value that whether right or wrong they are essentially constructive and are building on a common plan. It is more important to understand that plan and the reason why these books have appeared almost simultaneously than to discuss any of the details. The subject may perhaps best be dealt with, for the present purpose, by an explanation of the genesis of 'The Beginnings of Christianity.'

In the thirty years between 1860 and 1890, English theological scholarship was probably at as high a point as it reached during the nineteenth century. Bishop Lightfoot had achieved a position of leadership in the historical investigation of the documents of early Christianity, and the fame of Hort, Salmon, and Hatch had won recognition throughout Europe. Unfortunately Lightfoot never lived to complete the work which he had

begun, no successors were found to produce any historical commentaries comparable to his, while Hatch died prematurely, and Salmon and Hort produced but few books. Dr. Foakes Jackson and I had often discussed this lacuna in English scholarship, and in 1913 we determined to do what we could to organize an attempt to carry on, however imperfectly, the tradition of Lightfoot, and deal with the beginnings of Christianity in the light of modern knowledge, and with due regard to the problems at present most under discussion by the scholars of all countries.

The critical treatment of the Acts of the Apostles had remained especially backward in English books; it needed to be analyzed, and its evidence as to the growth of early Christian thought added to that derived from the similar treatment of the gospels and epistles. Something, but not enough, had been done on this subject in Germany, hardly anything in England. It therefore seemed obvious in 1913 that the next step called for was an historical commentary on Acts, not so much to disentangle geographical and archaeological riddles, for that had been done with extraordinary skill and success by Sir William Ramsay, but in order to analyze the forms of thought, especially in the earlier chapters, and to establish their relation to the earlier and later parts of the Synoptic tradition. For it is safe to say that the Synoptic tradition represents a process in which varying stages of development can be traced, much as a geologist traces stages by the fossils embedded in the various strata of the earth's surface.

Meanwhile the same conviction seems to have entered the mind of several writers on the Continent, and the books treated in this article are its result. This is not so obviously true of Johannes Weiss as of the others, but speaking generally all of these continental writers have the same object which marks the difference between the point of view of today and of yesterday. They are endeavouring to reconstruct the story of Christian origins, and are engaged in literary criticism merely because that is for the moment the most useful instrument. But it is not historical reconstruction merely in the sense of recovering a sequence of events, but rather what, for lack of an English

word, must be called *religionsgeschichtlich*. None of the group of writers mentioned care much whether Paul visited one place rather than another or whether Peter was put to death under Nero or not. Their real interest is that intertwining of more than one type of religion which produced Catholic Christianity. The documents are important because they represent varieties of religious experience which are as much alive today as they ever were, though the forms which they take are different.

This is of course quite well understood in America because American theology has always been largely influenced by German work, but in England the situation is different. No large contribution of this nature has been made by British scholars or is apparently likely to be made. They are going on in their own way, which has, indeed, many advantages, without appreciating and certainly without sharing in the general methods of continental and American scholarship. This was shown very plainly in the long article of Dr. Headlam in the *Church Quarterly Review* on 'The Beginnings of Christianity.' It calls for no rejoinder from those who are satisfied with the method of modern historical criticism, for he points out no mistakes and deals with no problems, but merely issues a general *non licet esse vos* which has no importance outside of Oxford; but it raises the interesting problem of why English scholarship has taken this turn with regard to New Testament criticism.

The situation cannot be understood without reference to the dispute which raged in the nineteenth century as to the Old Testament. That controversy may be presented thus: the tradition of Judaism stated, on the authority of its sacred book, that the Law had been given by God himself, through Moses; it was inspired and infallible. It had often been disobeyed; at one time it had been lost; but it had always existed, and the prophets had insisted on its tenets. No serious doubt had ever been thrown on this tradition until it occurred to some students of the Old Testament that the early literature of the Jewish church did not confirm it. On examination the Israelites of the time of the monarchy were seen to have lived without the Law in its complete form, and the prophets themselves

were found to have had no knowledge of it. Investigation revealed a long process of growth and accretion, in religious life, in theological thought, and in the extent and teaching of the sacred writings. Religious life had developed and changed from the days of the nomad Hebrews in the time of the patriarchs to those of the commercial Jews after the captivity. Theology had similarly changed; from a dim background of polytheism emerged the 'monolatry' of the ninth century, changing gradually to the monotheism of the sixth. The documents themselves proved to be composite, and the Law to be a compilation covering centuries of accretion. Neither thought nor practice had remained constant: Jewish religion does not tell the story of a faith once delivered to the saints, but of opinion gradually formed by them, with the occasional co-operation of sinners. Moreover the theory proved futile that the religion of Israel was a development of elements always latent. Every day made it plainer that Israel had borrowed not only jewels of silver and jewels of gold from the Egyptians but also less material possessions from Babylonia, Assyria, Persia, and Greece. There was — and is — room for fruitful inquiry as to the extent of the borrowing, none as to its reality.

All this is now the current coin of accepted thought, but since the Jewish tradition had been in the main adopted by the Christian church it is not strange that ecclesiastical opinion at first waxed hot in anger against the critics of the Old Testament. Nevertheless Oxford at least tolerated Driver and Cheyne, and Cambridge provided to Robertson Smith a shelter from the storm. The faithful consoled themselves with the thought that little harm had been done. Though the impregnable rock of the Old Testament had been shattered, the voice of the church declared the New Testament to be safe. A few divines, it is true, like Canon Liddon, who combined real understanding of critical results with tenacious adherence to tradition, maintained that the "Higher Criticism" of the Old Testament must inevitably lead to the abandonment of the Catholic position as to the New Testament and the ministry of Jesus. But in general criticism made its way both in the church and in the universities. It was immensely helped by



the support lent for the time by the rising school of *Lux Mundi*, which regarded with complacency the overthrow of a book cherished by Jews and Protestants, but forgot — like Marcion — that their own church was built on the same foundation.

The results of literary and historical criticism were soon combined. An entirely new version of the history of Israel and its religion was adopted. In accordance, moreover, with a singular peculiarity of theologians, the infallibility formerly claimed for the letter of Holy Scripture was transferred to the new orthodox criticism of the Old Testament. Yet the real revolution was not the replacement of Moses by JE and P — or even by Canon Driver's *Introduction to the Old Testament* — but the recognition that the religion of Israel was a process, partly of accretion, and that its sacred books, being no more infallible than any others, could be used for historical research only in the light of intelligent criticism.

Here, however, a halt was called. Though Dr. Liddon was right in declaring that criticism could not leave the New Testament alone, if it were once allowed to touch the Old, there was for many years a belief that the textual criticism and the literary analysis of the gospels and Acts would have no such disturbing results as the treatment of the pentateuch. Those of us who passed through Dr. Sanday's seminar in the nineties, know how little was ever said by or to any of us as to the reconstruction of history made necessary by the recognition of the Synoptic problem. The theory — which has its attractiveness — was that all dangerous 'subjectivity' could best be avoided by completely accumulating the critical data before considering the difference — in any case unimportant — which they make to the traditional presentation of history.

We who left Oxford long ago have in general abandoned this view. We think that critical investigation and historical presentation ought to be parallel and simultaneous, and that the difference made is great and serious. We regret the increasing gulf between us and our old friends, yet it must be acknowledged that it is we and not they who have made the change, and it is probably good to have a body of scholars like Dr. Headlam, Canon Streeter, Mr. Emmet, and Mr. Major who

perpetuate in the twentieth century the tradition of the nineteenth. No doubt the fruitfulness of those methods is not exhausted, and much can be obtained from the whole-hearted pursuit of them by those whose attention is not distracted by any premature vision of the importance of their results for the history of religion. The essay by Canon Streeter in the *Hibbert Journal* for October is an admirable example of what may still be looked for from the Oxford school. But the wish may be expressed that some of his colleagues would join him in publishing the information which they must have accumulated in these long years of silent study.

The consideration of the books which have been mentioned as representing the continental method shows that Acts has acquired in the development of historical criticism somewhat the same position as the investigation of the prophets of the eighth century played in Old Testament criticism. It is the point at which it is possible to trace the combination of earlier and later elements. Its analysis by literary methods is a real help to the understanding of history. That it should be Acts which claims this position is rather surprising. Twenty years ago it seemed plain that it would be the Fourth Gospel which would be the centre of discussion. Indeed, for a time it was so, but the publication of several remarkable books, among which may be mentioned James Drummond's *The Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, E. F. Scott's *The Fourth Gospel, its Purpose and Theology*, and Loisy's fascinating *Le Quatrième Évangile* convinced almost everyone that the Fourth Gospel was so clearly 'on the other side' that its study would not answer the question of origin. In England this result was hastened by Sanday's article on Jesus Christ in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*. In this Dr. Sanday endeavoured to use the Fourth Gospel as a source for the life of Christ alongside of the Synoptic tradition, but even his skill, combined as it was with so sincere an appreciation of the difficulties, could not obscure the fact that he had put together mechanically what could not really be combined. It was understood that he was engaged on a *Life of Christ* for which this article was the first sketch, but to those who understood the problem

it was plain that the first sketch was a prophecy of failure rather than the promise of fulfilment, and it is said that Dr. Sanday lived to realize that this was so, repeating in this respect the experience of Dr. Salmon.<sup>1</sup> Thus it came about that throughout the theological world the conviction has grown almost without discussion that the Fourth Gospel is definitely a document of the Catholic Church. It illustrates and does not explain Christian origins.

It is perhaps worth while to emphasize the nature of this judgment. It is the recognition that by the time the Fourth Gospel was written Christianity was definitely sacramental, or, to use a different phraseology of exactly identical meaning, was a mystery religion. So much, indeed, is obvious to anyone who reads the Fourth Gospel with some knowledge of the other mystery religions. Objection to such a statement comes, however, from two sides. A considerable body of Protestants dislike to admit that the Bible is in any part of it on the side of a Catholic doctrine of the sacraments. They desire, to use a much abused phrase, to spiritualize the sacramental teaching of the Fourth Gospel into closer accord with Protestant principles. Other Protestants, especially in Germany, have endeavoured quite unconsciously to underestimate the importance of the Fourth Gospel, and to interpret the Synoptic gospels as though they were the true foundation of the church. The historian, however, is obliged to realize that from the second century to the sixteenth the Christian church was supported by three pillars, the belief in the Logos-Son, Baptism, and the Mass. These three pillars rest securely on the Fourth Gospel. No one of the three can be fully explained from the Synoptic gospels alone. That is an admirable proof that the Synoptic tradition is in the main historical; but it also shows that it is a problem to be explained rather than the starting-point of everything in Christianity.

But if Protestants for various reasons dislike the attitude represented by Loisy towards the Fourth Gospel and sacramental Christianity, orthodox Catholics equally dislike the

<sup>1</sup> Something of Dr. Sanday's later state of mind may be learned from his book, published in 1920, entitled 'Divine Overruling.'

cleavage between the Synoptic gospels and the Fourth. To bridge the gulf they endeavour to read into the Synoptic gospels the sacramental Christianity which Protestants try to leave out of the Fourth. The historian, not for the first time in the record of the Church, is in the difficult position of pleasing neither ecclesiastical party. Nevertheless I do not doubt but that such historians as Loisy are right. I only doubt what he himself would admit to be debatable, — the extent to which sacramental Christianity was accepted by Paul himself, as distinct from Paul's converts. How near in any case Pauline Christianity was to being a mystery cult can be seen by anyone who, apart from the writings of Loisy, reads the short but epoch-making treatise of Heitmüller and notes how feeble have been the attempts to answer him.

The Johannine writings, then, are 'on the other side,' but the Lucan ones are at the parting of the ways, or, more accurately, at the place where the roads join. What were those roads? Whence do they come? Which of them leads to the historic Jesus? Which of them was travelled by Paul? Why, having come together, do they join and not cross? These are some of the questions which have been discussed by the writers mentioned. They approach them from various angles, but all employ the literary criticism of the Synoptic gospels and Acts as their chief instrument, and all endeavour to translate their critical results into historical statements.

Eduard Meyer and Schütz, though differing on many points, agree in using as a criterion the distinction between the Apostles and the Disciples of Jesus. Though not wholly new this is a point which appears not to have received as much attention as it deserves. Its chief importance is this. It is tolerably plain that the word apostle in its limited meaning of 'one of the Twelve' is Lucan. It is, indeed, found in Matthew and Mark, but so rarely that it is a legitimate hypothesis that it is due to contamination either with the Lucan writings or, more probably, with the traditions which Luke used. It may be connected with the same development which makes the word 'Lord' characteristic of the Lucan writings. Schütz indeed argues that the Twelve were originally the witnesses of the

risen Jesus and that in the gospels their appointment has been dated before the event. The analysis of Acts suggests that the Antiochian source is a 'disciple' source while the Jerusalem sources are 'apostle' sources. Eduard Meyer, somewhat changing the terminology, thinks that this distinction can be traced in Mark. He distinguishes a 'disciple' source in Mark from another which speaks of 'the Twelve,' and shows that if we follow his discrimination we reach an originally purely 'disciple' document and one which was much more consistent and orderly than the present gospel, itself contaminated with the 'Twelve' material. Eduard Meyer and Schütz do not agree as to the details, but it is obvious that behind their two books lies the same general idea that the Twelve, whether called apostles or not, represent the church of Jerusalem, while the 'disciples' represent rather the unbroken tradition of the Galilean teaching of Jesus. Personally I am the more willing to think that this theory is not wholly wrong because it agrees with some observations of my own in *The Stewardship of Faith* pointing in the same direction. I there drew attention to the certainty, as it seems to me, that there were many hearers of Jesus in Galilee who were deeply impressed by his teaching and might fairly claim to be disciples but who never connected him with messianic expectations which he did not encourage during his ministry. His teaching on the kingdom of God, his continuation of the tradition of the prophets in spiritualizing the Law, and his eschatological expectation of imminent catastrophe for the prosperous wicked and rescue for the suffering righteous, — all these remained, but they were not the basis of a church distinct from the synagogue. To such disciples Jesus was the teacher, not the Messiah. That such a group of disciples existed seems to me certain not merely because of the traces found by Meyer and Schütz but on grounds of general probability.

At this stage a very important addition to the picture may be made from Johannes Weiss. By far the most interesting section in the newer part of his 'Urchristentum' is the section on the oldest gospel combined with his remarks in the earlier part of the book on the teaching of Jesus. He shows how the

Gospel of Mark is in one respect essentially not different from the Gospel of John. It is the gospel about Jesus, not the gospel which Jesus preached. It is true that according to Mark the gospel about Jesus is that he was the Messiah, whereas, according to John, it is that he is the Logos-Son, but the fact that the content of the two books is different ought not to obscure their identity of purpose, — to preach Jesus, not to continue his message. On the other hand, if there be any truth at all in most critical reconstructions, Q was the perpetuation of the teaching of Jesus, it was not a gospel concerning him. Johannes Weiss did not combine this result with the ideas defended later by Meyer and Schütz, but the possibility of such a combination is obvious. It would mean that the reason why Q contained no account of the passion and death of Jesus is that this Galilean Christianity followed Jesus as a prophet, not as the Messiah. The death of a prophet does not invalidate, it may be even thought to confirm, his message. It is even possible that they knew nothing of the resurrection. That Jesus was the Messiah, in whatever sense that often misunderstood word may be used, and that he was risen from the dead and seated at the right hand of power, was the special message of the community which, though perhaps of Galilean origin, found itself in Jerusalem. The apostles were witnesses to the resurrection, not the perpetuators of the teaching of Jesus. As time went on, the 'disciples,' that is to say, the Galilean followers of the teaching of Jesus, and the apostles, the preachers of the resurrection, came together and each group learned from the other. The literary counterpart of this synthesis is to be seen in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke, which have each added large sections of the 'disciple' document Q to the apostolic document Mark.

Such would seem to be the general outlines of a theory of Christian origins formed by combining the results of Eduard Meyer, Schütz, and Johannes Weiss. It has the merit at least of explaining some things that otherwise are obscure, and it deserves careful attention. It curiously supplements 'The Beginnings of Christianity' at a point where the treatment in that book has been much condemned by some critics and

certainly caused much trouble to its writers. Starting with the Acts and investigating the gospels in order to see what light they throw on the story of Jesus regarded as the explanation of the origin of the church, the thing which seemed plainest was the little influence the teaching of Jesus had on the early church as represented by Acts. His teaching as distinct from the resurrection is scarcely mentioned. The same thing is true of the Pauline epistles; it is the death and resurrection of Jesus, not his teaching, which inspires Paul. Some of our critics in England, especially Dr. Inge, thought that we were wrong in saying so little about the teaching of Jesus and making it play so small a part in explaining the origin of the church. Nevertheless the facts are so, and if our critics would endeavour to prove out of the Acts and epistles that the teaching of Jesus played a larger part in the story of the origin of the church than we assigned it, they will discover that history is on our side. According to the tradition represented by the sources of Acts i-xv, Peter, Paul, Philip, Stephen, and Barnabas, who represent apostolic Christianity, did not say as much about the teaching of Jesus as we did in 'The Beginnings of Christianity.' When, therefore, such a critic as Mr. Emmet says that our statement is bad history, his accusation really lights on the head of Luke. Is he prepared to admit that Acts is bad history? If not, it would be better for him to join us in trying to understand the problem than to spend time in demolishing his own caricature of what we said.<sup>2</sup> That problem is not to explain away the facts as given in Acts, but to account for the survival of Q, which must have been the document of an important body of Christians, yet, nevertheless, did not affect Mark<sup>3</sup> or the early chapters of Acts. Surely a not improbable answer is to postulate the Galilean origin of

<sup>2</sup> He states in the *Modern Churchman* that I represent Jesus as a man of second-rate importance who allowed his disciples to call him 'Sir.' It is of course easy to refute this representation. But it is not mine.

<sup>3</sup> This would be denied by some critics, but I think that Wellhausen certainly has the better of Harnack on this point. In any case, even if it be not so, the influence of Q on Mark was small. Here too the suggestions of Wellhausen and Eduard Meyer as to the sources of Mark deserve further attention.

Q, thus combining the theories of Johannes Weiss and Schütz. The sequence of literary events would be the production in Jerusalem of the 'apostolic' tradition represented by Mark and by the sources of Acts i-xv and at the same time the production in Galilee of Q, which, in the language of Schütz, is in the main a 'disciple' document. The next stage brought the literary efforts of Matthew and Luke, both of whom united the apostolic tradition of Mark with Q.

The notable article by Canon Streeter in the *Hibbert Journal* presents facts which have to be taken into account in this connection. He argues that the basis of Luke is not really Mark but an already complete gospel into which Luke inserted some parts of Mark. His arguments cannot be reproduced here at length. They seem to me to be as convincing as any hypothesis of the kind can be. His view fits in admirably with that entertained by Harnack, accepted by Eduard Meyer, and I think probably right, to the effect that the writer of Acts made use of two separate Jerusalem traditions which appear dovetailed together in Acts i-v. Even better does it fit in with the view shared by Professor Burkitt and myself that the sounder of these traditions in Acts belongs to the same tradition and perhaps the same document as Mark. If Canon Streeter's view prove right, it is possible that we really have two complete Jerusalem traditions which Luke dovetailed together from the beginning of the Gospel to Acts v. It will then be a question whether it was he or some intermediate editor who made the combination with Q.

Two points remain upon which it does not at present seem to me necessary to go all the way with Meyer and Schütz. I doubt whether Mark ever was anything else than an 'apostolic' document, using the word 'apostolic' to mean emanating from that church which in Jerusalem was connected with the Twelve and especially with Peter. That Mark has a great deal to say about the disciples as distinct from the Twelve proves nothing, for the apostles had in any case been with Jesus in Galilee and had at that time been in the company of many 'disciples' who stayed in Galilee and did not go to Jerusalem. But Meyer's analysis of Mark will need prolonged and careful study.



Another point about which I am inclined to disagree with Schütz is the view which he takes of the relation of the Galilean disciples to Jesus on the one hand and to hellenistic Christianity, including Paul, on the other. His view is that Jesus had preached freedom from the Law in much the same way that Paul did later on. Paul is in this respect the true interpreter of Jesus, and apostolic Christianity is a Judaizing reaction. It is impossible to discuss this point at length. Schütz's suggestion would solve some problems, but at present I am inclined to think that hellenistic Christianity is, as Acts represents it to be, an offshoot of the Jerusalem church transplanted to Antioch in consequence of persecution and thence spreading. I doubt whether Paul can conceivably have been the product of Galilean Christianity, following the disciples of the teacher of Nazareth; for Paul, quite as clearly as Acts i-xv, preaches a crucified and risen Messiah, not a prophet or teacher.

All this question is, of course, intimately connected with the problem of Christology, which for this purpose means the discussion of the exact meaning and the history of the use of such phrases as 'Messiah,' 'Son of Man,' 'Lord,' etc., as applied to Jesus. It is here that 'The Beginnings of Christianity' will perhaps prove a useful supplement to the other books, for it endeavours to distinguish the varieties of christological statement more narrowly than do any of the other works. The general result reached is the same as that assumed by Schütz, namely that Jesus probably did not use the phrase 'Son of Man' (in the messianic sense) of himself, but that the apostles certainly did apply it to him.

All these books are concerned with the translation of critical results into historical statements. The next stage in the natural development of thought on this problem will be a translation into terms of religion. One form which this is likely to take is indicated in the German books, which imply, as though it were self-evident, that the teaching of Jesus is the really important and permanent element and that the apostolic church was a regrettable incident. To accept this position is pure Marcionism, for it means that we can afford to take a whole era of history and condemn it. If these writers be correct, Jesus was a

human being with no essential claim to be regarded as divine in a sense different from other men. He never claimed to be the Messiah or the Logos. He wrought no miracles, but he was a teacher who made a final revelation of spiritual and moral truth which the world had not known before and cannot gain elsewhere. Even if this is not Marcionism, it is surely wrong; for a non-miraculous human being cannot have given teaching sufficient for all ages. Schütz seems to think that this is the tradition of Paul and Luther. One regrets that it is impossible to hear what Luther or Paul would have said on the subject, for even if they had not added to our understanding of theology they would at least have enriched the literature of invective. If Jesus be a teacher and not divine, and there is much to be said for this view, theologians must have the courage of their opinions, place Jesus in the line of teachers and prophets which will never end while the world lasts, and take his teachings as a landmark in history, not as its goal. This position, whether right or wrong, is at least not unreasonable. It is the alternative to traditional orthodox Christianity. What seems to me historically and philosophically absurd is the position expounded by Dr. Rashdall, Dean of Carlisle, who at the meeting of the Modern Churchmen's Union in 1921 explained that of course Jesus did not regard himself as the Messiah or as God, but apparently (he is not very clear) thinks that nevertheless the church was right in giving that rank to him, and that Chalcedonian doctrine, properly understood, is still tenable. It is possible that the church understood the nature of Jesus better than the Lord himself, but the most radical critics and the simplest Christians will probably agree in preferring what each of them in his own way believes to be Jesus' own view.

Those, however, who feel obliged to accept the results of criticism so far as Jesus is concerned, yet who are compelled by the verdict of history, as well as by their own experience, to assert the preëminence of Christianity, and especially of Catholic Christianity, in the history of religion, are forced to give a reason for the faith that is in them. It is a mistake to suppose that they do not appreciate the value of the teaching

of Jesus. On the contrary, they are perfectly well aware that the world has never yet recognized his full importance. That men should love their enemies and do good to their neighbors may sound a simple creed, to be sneered at as commonplace and jejune, but the world would be changed more rapidly if such teaching were followed than by anything else that the mind can conceive, and it was not a critic of the twentieth century but Jesus himself who expressed a preference for those who tried thus to live over those who called him Lord.

Nevertheless the church never has been merely an institution for propagating this or any other form of teaching. It has been a great instrument for the purification of men's minds and souls. It has been, such at least must be the verdict of history, neither infallible nor indefectible in endeavouring to fulfil this mission, but there has never been any institution which has met with so much success. As generation after generation of Catholics went on their way through the world, they endeavoured to follow moral teaching, which was no new thing, (so the historian of religion asserts, and here Eusebius of Caesarea agrees with him), but came from the prophets through Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples. But on their way through the world the friction and the pressure of life brought with it many impurities, the swell of passion, the blindness of temper, and the thrust of desire. Those impurities could not be overcome by the appeal of reason, which had rejected them in advance. The cure was psychological, not intellectual, and it was contributed to the Christian church neither by Jesus nor by the Jews but by the gentiles. It was the sacramental system, the mysteries, which in the main gave men what they needed, purification and strength that they might follow the moral vision which they had seen. Lutheran, and even Calvinistic, Christianity changed the theory but not the practice. It still remains true that the orthodox churches are shown by experience to give purification, though reason may show that they do not give intellectual truth. To explain why this is so is the great problem before the theologians and psychologists of the future.